

Message Text

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SUBJECT: BOURGUIBA SPEAKS TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON
MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT

1. SUMMARY: IN ONE-AND-HALF HOUR SPEECH TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MORNING NOVEMBER 6, PRESIENT BOURGUIBA REPEATED NUMBER OF HIS FAVORITE THEMES ON MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM, I.E., IMPORTANCE OF 1947 UN RESOLUTION AS BASIS FOR PEACE, FACT THAT SOLVING PALESTINIAN PROBLEM IS KEY TO ANY LONG-TERM SOLUTION, DANGER OF SPREAD OF SOVEIT INFLUENCE IN AREA BECAUSE OF CONFLICT AND FACT THAT U.S. ALONE CAN FORCE ISRAEL TO ACCEPT PEACE SETTLEMENT ONCE U.S. PUBLIC OPINION HAS BEEN RIGHTED AS HE THINKS IS PRESENTLY IN PROCESS. HE ALSO SAID HE WILL BE GOING TO U.S. IN MAY AND WILL HELP ALTER U.S. PUBLIC OPINION EVEN IF GOLDA MEIR WERE TO COME THERE TO REBUT HIM.HE CRITICIZED EGYPT'S CONDUCT OF WAR AND ACCEPTANCE OF CEASEFIRE SAYING HE COULD HAVE WARNED EGYPT THEY WOULD END UP FIGHTING U.S. HE DOUBTED VALUE OF ARAB SUMMIT BUT TOLD QADHAFI HE WOULD ATTEND IF ONE IS HELD. SAID ONLY POSITIVE RESULT OF WAR FOR ARABS WAS DEMONSTRATION OF SOLDIERS' COURAGE WHICH DESTROYED MYTH THAT ARABS CANNOT FIGHT ISRAELIS IF GIVEN PROPER EQUIPMENT. HE WARNED ISRAEL SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT UNTIL SETTLEMENT REACHED WHICH GIVES SATISFACTION TO

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ARABS AND PALESTINIANS, WAR WILL CONTINUE EVEN FOR ONE

HUNDRED YEARS IF NECESSARY. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA GAVE HIS FIRST LENGTHY SPEECH ON MIDDLE EAST SITUATION SINCE "RAMADAN" WAR BEFORE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON NOV 6 PRIOR TO ARRIVAL OF SECRETARY KISSINGER. WHILE SPEECH HAD BEEN SCHEDULED BEFORE KISSINGER VISIT, PLANNED, BOURGUIBA USED SPEECH AS OCCASION OUTLINE WHAT HE WOULD TELL HIS VISITOR. OVER HALF OF SPEECH DEVOTED TO CONFLICT, OF WHICH SALIENT POINTS GIVEN BELOW. SIGNIFICANT STATEMENTS HE MADE ON DOMESTIC AFFAIRS WILL BE REPORTED SEPARATELY.

3. BOURGUIBA REITERATED HIS CRITICISM OF LACK OF CONTACT AMONG ARABS ON WAR AND CEASEFIRE DECISION. HE HAD TOLD QADHAFI AFTER CEASEFIRE ESTABLISHED HE SAW LITTLE REASON FOR ARAB SUMMIT. HE LATER INDICATED HE HAD AGREED TO ATTEND IF ONE HELD BUT SEEMED SKEPTICAL THAT SUMMIT IF HELD WOULD BE USEFUL. HE SAID EGYPT HAD BEEN FORCED TO ACCEPT CEASEFIRE BECAUSE IT WAS ALMOST AT WAR WITH U.S. INASMUCH AS AMERICAN PLANES AND "AMERICAN PILOTS" WERE INVOLVED AND ARMS ARE STILL BEING FURNISHED TO ISRAEL. HE SAID IF HE HAD BEEN CONSULTED ON WAR PLANS HE WOULD HAVE ADVISED FIRST WORKING ON U.S. PUBLIC OPINION TO GAIN LARGER ACCEPTANCE OF 1947 UN RESOLUTION WHICH HE CLAIMS STILL ONLY LEGITIMATE BASIS FOR PEACE.

4. HE SAID HE PLANS USE HIS VISIT TO U.S. NEXT MAY TO ALTER U.S. OPINION ON ME CONFLICT. HE CHALLENGED ISRAELIS TO REBUT HIM AND WELCOMED EVEN "MADAME GOLDA MEIR'S" PRESENCE IN DEBATE. HE CONVINCED U.S. PUBLIC OPINION CHANGING AND CITED STATISTICS OF LATEST POLL TO THIS EFFECT. HE ALSO CLAIMED SENATOR FULBRIGHT SUPPORTS A RETURN TO THE 1947 LINES AND SPECULATED FULBRIGHT MIGHT BE ELECTED PRESIDENT AFTER NIXON. BOURGUIBA SAID HE ALSO WOULD PRESENT HIS SOLUTION TO ARABS AND PALESTINIANS AND HE SURE LATTER WILL AGREE TO IT. HE LATER EXPRESSED VIEW THAT PALESTINIANS ALREADY ACCEPT 1947 RESOLUTION.

5. BOURGUIBA SAID ABOVE WAS WHAT HE WOULD TELL SECRETARY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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KISSINGER WHEN HE SAW HIM LATER SAME DAY. HE SAID IT INCONCEIVABLE U.S. WOULD SACRIFICE ALL ITS INTERESTS IN ARAB WORLD BY ITS SUPPORT OF ISRAEL. HE UNDERLINED THAT SINCE U.S. HAS SUPPORTED ISRAEL AND ENJOYS A CERTAIN INFLUENCE THERE, IT IS POSSIBLE FOR IT TO EXERCISE PRESSURE ON ISRAEL TO ACCEPT HIS SOLUTION. THIS DOES NOT MEAN ISRAELIS WILL BE THROWN INTO THE SEA BUT IS FORMULA THEY ONCE ACCEPTED AND IS BASED ON INTERNATIONAL LEGALITY.

6. BOURGUIBA CALLED ON ISRAELIS TO SHOW MODERATION IN THEIR OWN SELF-INTEREST SINCE HISTORY HAD SHOWN THAT ARABS WILL GO TO GREAT LENGTHS TO ACHIEVE THEIR OBJECTIVES. HE SAID WAR COLD LAST ONE HUNDRED YEARS IF NECESSARY, BUT ARABS IN END WOULD WIN.

7. BOURGUIBA ALSO CRITICIZED EGYPT AS BEING INTERESTED ONLY IN RECOVERING SINAI WHILE REAL QUESTION IS FATE OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. HE AGAIN CAUTIONED ARABS ABOUT SOVIET MENACE IN MIDDLE EAST. HE SAID U.S. TROOP ALERT HAD COOLED SOVIET ZEAL IN THIS AREA BUT THEY NOW HAD OBSERVERS ON CEASEFIRE LINES AND THEIR PRESENCE WAS WIDE-SPREAD IN MIDDLE EAST AREA.

8. COMMENT: APART FROM ANNOUNCEMENTS THAT HE WAS GOING TO U.S. NEXT MAY AND HE WOULD ATTEND SUMMIT RELUCTANTLY IF HELD, THERE LITTLE NEW IN THIS PORTION OF SPEECH. NEVERTHELESS, THE FACT THAT HE USED PUBLIC FORUM TO PRESENT WHAT HE PLANNED TO TELL KISSINGER MAKES SPEECH OF MORE THAN PASSING INTEREST IN CURRENT ME CONTEXT.

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